

# Growth Focus Area

## Introduction:

The projects in the Growth Focus Area are aimed at effectively managing the rapid growth and development that Tucson continues to experience. The Growth Focus is also aimed at improving the quality of life in the established part of the city, including necessary investments, redevelopment opportunities, and enhancing the qualities that make Tucson unique. Long range planning to accomplish these goals continues to be the highest level priority for the City of Tucson.



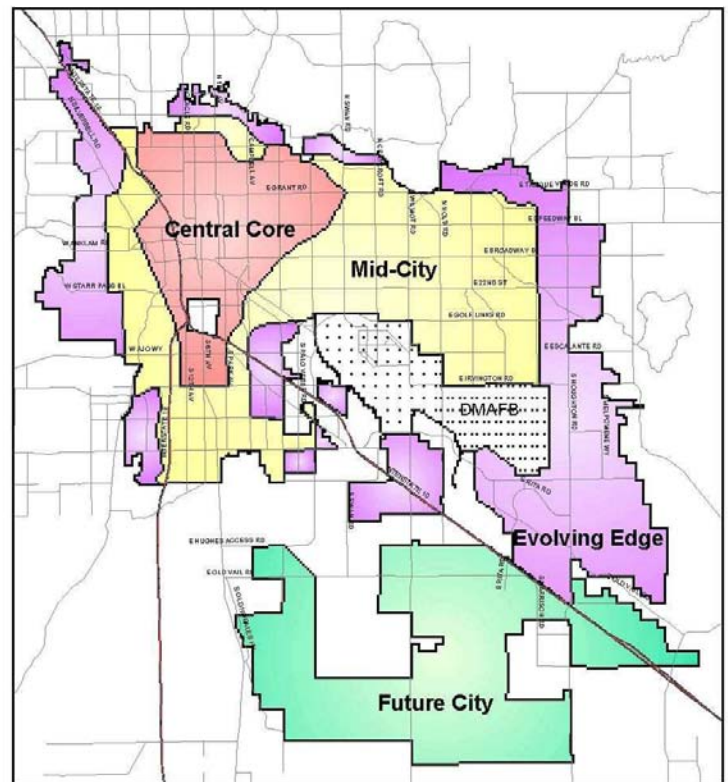
The City of Tucson's General Plan, which was adopted by voters in 2001, designates four growth areas depicted in the map below. Each of these areas, the "Central Core," "Mid-City," "Evolving Edge" and "Future City" recognizes the unique stage of evolution of various sections of the City. Each growth area has a separate set of policies reflective of development characteristics, infrastructure availability, and future population growth.

As Tucson continues to grow, our existing land use pattern needs to progress to one that features mixed-use development and a range of densities, while ensuring neighborhood compatibility. A more sustainable land use pattern maximizes the utilization of our resources in providing desirable and necessary infrastructure and services to our citizens. It also allows for open space preservation and the incorporation of the natural environment into the built environment. Planning is essential to ensure that the challenges and opportunities in each growth area are understood, prioritized, and effectively implemented. In addition, building effective partnerships, with other governments in the region and with the private sector are key to success.

## Strategic Policy Statements:

1. *Grow smarter in newly developing areas.* This includes providing the capital and infrastructure planning needed to ensure the orderly and sustainable growth of the community.
2. *Reinvest in the central city.* Opportunities for investment and redevelopment in inner-city areas need to be understood and achievable implementation strategies need to be developed. The need for investment in aging infrastructure must be addressed through the City's capital improvement program.
3. *Protect Tucson's character through good design.* We must understand the history of our built environment, and provide achievable solutions to correct existing deficiencies, and ensure that past mistakes are not repeated.
4. *Improve services and infrastructure to address the demands of a growing community.* The costs associated with growth needs to be understood for appropriate capital improvements planning and budgeting. This includes funding strategies, such as impact fees, community facilities districts, county and state funding and other sources. New development must finance its fair share of capital costs.
5. *Address the impacts of an aging housing stock and develop programs to assist with maintenance and replacement needs.*

City of Tucson Growth Areas



**1. Grow smarter in newly developing areas. This includes providing the capital and infrastructure planning needed to ensure the orderly and sustainable growth of the community.**

**Priority Projects:**

**Houghton Area Master Plan** – This project involves master planning of approximately 9,000 acres on the City's eastern edge along Houghton Road between Tanque Verde Road and Interstate 10. Much of this area is now vacant or is underdeveloped and will experience tremendous growth in the future. It is critical that the City plan ahead to guide development in this area. This project will be a comprehensive planning effort that integrates and updates land use, transportation, infrastructure and service plans into a legally adopted land use plan.

**Plan for Annexation** – The Mayor and Council approved a Plan for Annexation in 2004. The plan includes an analysis of the effects of urbanized unincorporated areas on the City, planning areas for future annexations, priority areas for annexation, strategies for successful annexation and the identification of legislative initiatives. The plan also provides for initial regional planning guidance for adjacent undeveloped areas. Messages about annexation will be refined and will be targeted toward residential and non-residential annexations. Opportunities for cooperative planning initiatives between the City, County, State and Federal governments will be identified and pursued.

**2. Reinvest in the central city. Opportunities for investment and redevelopment in inner-city areas need to be understood and achievable implementation strategies need to be developed. The need for investment in aging infrastructure must be addressed through the City's capital improvement program.**

**Priority Projects:**

**Tucson Major Transit Investment Study / Alternative Analysis** - This project will analyze mobility needs and compare the costs, benefits, and impact of transportation alternatives along key corridors that link downtown to the University of Arizona and University Medical Center. This analysis is the first step toward securing Federal Transit Administration funding for high capacity transit improvements in this area. An important focus of the study will be looking at land uses along the corridors and the potential for redevelopment, economic development and transit-oriented development opportunities that will help make transit improvements successful.

**Historic Preservation Plan** – The City shall initiate the development of a historic preservation plan, working closely with the Tucson-Pima Historic Commission, neighborhood organizations, the local design community and others. The goal of the plan will be to identify priorities for historic preservation and establishment of a list of eligible properties and historic districts. The plan will address all periods of architecture, including the Post WWII era.



**3. Protect Tucson's character through good design. We must understand the history of our built environment, and provide achievable solutions to correct existing deficiencies, and ensure that past mistakes are not repeated.**

**Priority Projects:**

**Urban Design: Building & Development Guidelines**

– The purpose of this project is to implement guidelines and provide incentives for development that improves the appearance and functioning of the urban environment. New development must preserve positive aspects of the community's character. This program will address urban design issues through design education and standards, land use code amendments, and community participation. The Community Design Academy, which stemmed from the Sonoran Institute's "Building from the Best of Tucson" program, seeks to educate citizens on development practices that reflect high civic quality, local character and environmental sensitivity. A series of amendments have been approved and will be proposed in support of this project. Additional modifications will be reviewed with input from neighborhood organizations that are working in conjunction with community stakeholders.

**Landscape Management Program** – This project involves the creation of a comprehensive landscape management plan for the City. This will include the establishment of standards for planting and maintenance across city departments and the private environment. Guidance relative to soil suitability, maintenance, consistency between public and private property, and irrigation standards will be provided. The determination of roles and responsibilities for the urban landscape will be assessed.



**4. Improve services and infrastructure to address the demands of a growing community. The costs associated with growth needs to be understood for appropriate capital improvements planning and budgeting. This includes funding strategies, such as impact fees, community facilities districts, county and state funding and other sources. New development must finance its fair share of capital costs.**

**Priority Projects:**

**Cost of Service Study** - The Mayor and Council directed staff to undertake a "cost of service" study to examine the feasibility of implementing development impact fees as directed through the voter approved General Plan. In FY2004 feasibility study was completed and stakeholder group formed which resulted in the adoption of impact fees for parks and roads. During FY2005 refinements to the impact fee ordinance will be evaluated. In addition, the use of impact fees for other types of capital improvements will be explored.



**2004 Pima County Bond Program** – Pima County held a bond election in May 2004 to fund projects in the areas of open space, neighborhood investment and public safety. Throughout the year, City staff worked with the County to advocate for City needs and City projects. Albert Elias was the City's representative on the bond planning committee. The City's focus on the 2004 Pima County Bond project has now transitioned to implementation. For each project that the City is managing, a City department has been assigned to oversee the project to completion. Staff is also tracking City requested projects that Pima County is managing.



**Long Range Water Resource Plan** – The Tucson Water Department has completed a draft comprehensive update of its Water Resources Plan 1990-2100 to initiate a dialogue between Tucson Water and the community about the water-resource challenges which must be addressed in the coming years. The goals of Water Plan 2000-2050 are to meet future demand for water resources in a manner that is environmentally sound, cost-effective, meets State regulatory requirements and provides water that is acceptable and affordable. Water Plan: 2000-2050 identifies several critical decisions that must be made by the community and decision-makers at key points in time. Tucson's Mayor and Council directed Tucson Water staff to begin an education and public involvement process that will ensure that the community has the information necessary to make these critical decisions and is provided with many opportunities for input and discussion.

In developing this revision, the Department used an innovative planning strategy that provides a recommended pathway to meet water needs through the year 2050, yet allows maximum flexibility to meet future challenges and take advantage of opportunities that may occur.

**Stormwater Basin Management Program** –

The City will develop a work unit to inventory, map and inspect all existing and future private detention/retention basins on a regular basis to ensure community compliance with the City's drainage manual and standards.



**5. Address the impacts of an aging housing stock and develop programs to assist with maintenance and replacement needs.**

**Priority Projects:**

**PIA Inspection Program** – Create a new fee-for-service inspection program, which will inspect residential subdivision infrastructure slated to be turned over to the City for operational maintenance. The creation of this inspection unit comes as the result of discussions with the home building industry who asked for a comprehensive and streamlined inspection program.

**Infill Redevelopment Strategy** - This effort seeks to encourage infill and redevelopment in the growth areas identified in the General Plan: "Central Core," "Mid-City", "Evolving Edge" and "Future City". These different growth areas require different strategies and policies to address current challenges and to build upon future opportunities. Criteria will be developed that will include an inventory of eligible properties, developer incentives, neighborhood input processes, and other approaches for identifying appropriate infill and redevelopment.

